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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

OT

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Newsletter of
The Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy

Autumn 2014

Congratulations to the MOT 2014 Graduating Class



2014 Capstone Conference: Enhancing Collaborative Communities



Michael Lee

A resounding success, the 2014 Capstone Conference held August 28 highlighted the academic work and research completed by the graduating class in the field of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy. The student-organized conference featured 25 pairs of students presenting on diverse topics. Highlights included keynote speaker Paulette Bourgeois, a former Occupational Therapist and writer who is best-known for creating *Franklin the Turtle*; and faculty speaker Dr. Michael Lee whose research includes occupational participation for people with mental health issues, and teaching methodologies in adult education.



Paulette Bourgeois

Capstone Conference

By Kerry Blackadar

Cabling, purling, and twisting. A year ago, if you were to have asked Laura Brooks and Kim Ta about knitting techniques - they probably wouldn't have had much to say.

But today, Brooks and Ta can both speak volumes about the craft.

"Knitting has made a come-back in both the craft world and health care," say Brooks, a soon-to-be graduate of UB-C's Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) program. "Self-management strategies that are stress-reducing and health-promoting are important for healthy individuals as well as those living with a chronic illness, and we are seeing people of all ages in hospitals, prisons, and formal group therapy settings using knitting."

Over the past year, as part of their year-long MOT research project, Brooks and Ta conducted in-depth interviews with over twenty members of a community-based knitting group in an effort to understand how engagement in a creative occupation - like knitting - contributes to the health, well-being, and positive identity for people living with or without, a chronic health condition.

"We had a huge interest right off the bat," says Brooks. "A lot of people have been trying to let their friends and family and health practitioners know how important knitting is for them and that it's good for their health. This was their opportunity to say everything that they were thinking and feeling about knitting."

"And it goes far beyond just knitting," adds Ta, noting the impressive culture that has built up around the craft, with some local knitters travelling miles to local farms to shear sheep, dye and spin their own wool.

On August 28, Brooks and Ta had a chance to share their study findings at the 9th annual Capstone Conference, held at the Vancouver Public Library.

"We found that knitting has therapeutic implications for mental health and well-being, it has very important social value, cognitive health benefits, it improves and informs a positive identity, and it is also a creative outlet for self-expression," Brooks and Ta announced to a room full of wide-eyed peers and faculty members - one of whom was knitting.

But Brooks and Ta weren't the only students to reveal some exciting developments in the field of occupational therapy during the Capstone Conference.

The day-long event was an opportunity for every student part of this year's Master of Occupational Therapy graduating class to present highlights from their academic work and research in the field of occupational therapy. Studies ranged from examinations on sexuality and sexual function among individuals with spinal cord injury through to the impact of international fieldwork placements.

For Cloe Whittaker and Emily Grant, who studied the experiences of male artists living with chronic illness and disa-

bility, the opportunity to present their research findings to their peers was particularly exciting.

"I take away different things each year that I've attended the Capstone Conference," says Whittaker. "This year was very exciting and I had a great experience, but I was surprised at my periodic pangs of nervousness over sharing what were the findings of my first ever research project! I thought that it must be how our participants feel when they share their artwork. It was especially exciting to share our



findings because we focused on men - a population that hasn't yet been given special attention as of yet in this area of OT research."

"It all went by in a blur," adds Grant. "It was great to get feedback from peers, faculty, community members and clinicians."

But the Capstone Conference isn't just for the graduating class, says Dr. Catherine Backman, head of the Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy (OSOT) department. The event presents an excellent opportunity for incoming students to gain a glimpse of what the future holds for them as they embark on their graduate education. It's also a chance for the professional community to engage in continuing professional development, hear about a new practice approach, and reflect on up-and-coming research.

"The highlight for me is always the atmosphere created by the students: one of professionalism, pride, a touch of nervousness for some, and a strong sense of community or support for one another. They put their best foot forward and it's usually clad in a pretty spiffy shoe," says Backman.

And many students - including Whittaker and Grant - plan to take their research one step further after graduation and publish their findings.

Brooks and Ta are also looking to publish their findings on knitting and, over the next several months, will be working with their supervisors towards this goal - taking time, of course, for a few knitting breaks along the way.

More on Capstone on Page 11

MOT Students



On October 5th, a "mOTley crew" of 25 MOT2 students and friends decked out in pink participated in the CIBC Run for the Cure. The students raised \$740 in their support of breast cancer awareness, friends & family, and Kathryn!

gOT Spirit challenge for OT Month

by Stephanie (Poje) Chauhan

How often have you heard "Occupational therapy is like physical therapy" or "OTs are the wheelchair people" or "an OT gave my grandma a bath bench"? Well UBC students are trying to fix some of those misconceptions during national OT month!

First & second year students are participating in the annual "gOT Spirit Challenge," a friendly competition that asks MOT programs across the country to celebrate and advocate for OT. This year's video submission will aim to address some of the often heard misconceptions about occupational therapy in the community.

By asking community members about OT, we have the opportunity to start a conversation about what we really do and where we really work, spreading the word and the OT love!



On September 27 and 28 at the UBC Day of the Longboat competitions, the OT Crashers won first place in their division!

MOT Students

New Award: Tom Henrik Walter Award

By Cynthia Lin Hsieh

This year, the department was pleased to establish a new student award. The Tom Henrik Walter Award was created by Heddi and Tony Walter in memory of their late son, who graduated with a BSc(OT) from UBC in 1988. Tom is remembered as a friendly colleague among his class members, and enjoyed his occupational therapy practice. In July, MOT year 2 student Laura Bulk was the first recipient of this new award. She is now enrolled in the PhD in Rehabilitation Sciences.

The \$1,000 award recognizes students in their final year of the MOT program who have excelled in their degree through perseverance and hard work. The awards are made on the recommendation of the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy in consultation with the Faculty of Graduate Studies. We greatly thank the Walter family for their kind gift to the department, in support of future occupational therapists.



Department Head Dr. Catherine Backman giving award to Laura Bulk



Tom Henrik Walter

Staff Updates

Fond Farewell:

Rehana Frankland left OSOT in August, to pursue a new position at SFU as Manager of Graduate Programs in the Faculty of Health Sciences. We wish her well and know that she is missed.

Welcome:

Sonia Dhillon recently joined the OSOT team as MOT Student Services Manager on October 1, and will manage the MOT student portfolio, including recruitment, admissions, graduation, credentialing, and alumni affairs. Sonia has been at UBC for six years, the past three as Graduate Student Coordinator in Electrical and Computer Engineering.

Kristen Elder also joined as Departmental Assistant on August 29, to support OSOT Director Catherine Backman, as well as assisting with administrative responsibilities. Kristen has been at UBC for over seven years, most recently at the Office of the Senate as Academic Governance Assistant and Faculty Secretary.

A World of Health and Well-Being

Join the 5th Occupational Therapy 24-hour Virtual Exchange (OT24Vx) - a **FREE** online conference giving occupational therapists everywhere and those interested in occupational therapy a place to share what they are doing and thinking. Join for 24 hours of sessions with clinicians, researchers and students to educate, inspire, and provoke, so all can benefit. **November 3, 2014** at www.ot4ot.com/ot24vx.html



Alumni

Combined degree grads celebrate 40 years

In 1969 UBC initiated the new combined degree program in Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy, establishing the Bachelor of Science in Rehabilitation Medicine (BSR); it grew out of the original combined certificate program established at UBC in 1961. The class of '74, fourth to graduate with the new degree, recently celebrated its 40th reunion, with a luncheon at the Point Grey Golf Club.

The years peeled away as colleagues re-kindled their friendships and fondly remembered both the challenges and satisfactions of our time at UBC. Although the combined training program was relatively short-lived academically speaking (last graduates in 1985), many of its alumni have been ardent advocates of their combined trained perspective. Indeed, this was one of the recurring comments at the reunion. Even after 40 years, the passion for the professions remains strong, based on the core values of patient centred-ness and advocacy.

While most have practiced within the professions, several graduates have taken a related career path, building on these same core values. As one colleague articulated, "We were blessed to find a flexible, engaging career and our clients were blessed to have the interest, hope and enthusiasm that we brought to the professions".



Classmates reminisce at the Point Grey Golf Club - Valerie Hodgson, Valerie Jones (Halpin) Pam Bibby (McLaughlin), Darcy Cooper (Vogan)

The luncheon was followed by a tour of the Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy educational facilities, kindly provided by Department Heads Dr. Janice Eng and Dr. Catherine Backman, a sharp contrast to the 'army huts' in which we practiced our clinical skills. While the educational style and facilities are markedly advanced from our day, we noted with satisfaction the focus on evidence-based practice and the enduring focus on the core foundations of both professions.

We left feeling proud to be members of the professions and part of this special community of UBC educated therapists.



Barb Bunton (Hoye) reunites with an old friend

Postdoctoral Fellows

Introducing Dr. Skye Barbic...

Born and raised in Montreal, Dr. Skye Barbic is a post-doctoral fellow at the University of British Columbia in the Departments of Psychiatry and OSOT. Skye recently completed her first post-doctoral fellowship at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto where she developed a comprehensive measure of personal recovery for people with serious mental health conditions such as schizophrenia. She is beginning a second fellowship at UBC under the mentorship of Drs. William Honer and Catherine Backman.

Skye is a registered occupational therapist with a clinical sub-specialist interest in the rehabilitation of adults with serious mental illness. Her clinical training was at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario and she completed her doctoral studies at McGill University. Skye has taught courses in occupational therapy and supervised students at the University of Toronto, McGill and Queen's. She is passionate about her profession and her goal is to promote the role for occupational therapists as evidence based leaders in mental health rehabilitation and beyond.

During her upcoming postdoctoral year, Skye has two projects. First, Skye is planning to test an assessment tool to understand and measure personal recovery. The tool is called the Personal Recovery Outcome Measure (PROM). This will involve administering the rating scale to over 300 people receiving outpatient mental health services from one of three centers in the United States and Canada.

Skye's second project will build off existing work from the Hotel Study led by Dr. Honer. The Hotel Study is a large project that follows over 3000 individuals who reside in single-room occupancy (SRO) hotels in Vancouver's

Continued...

Postdoctoral Fellows

Skye Barbic continued...

Downtown Eastside. Two-thirds of this study cohort report being previously homeless and suffering an average of three illnesses at the same time including mental illness, substance abuse, and infectious disease. The general aim of this project is to better inform the provision of health care and housing among this population. Skye will be joining this team to study the impact of social determinants of health on the trajectories of functional outcomes amongst this group. Further, she aims to shed light into the important role for occupational therapy in supporting individuals living in SROs so that they can optimize their personal recovery and quality of life.

After much travel across the country, Skye hopes Vancouver is the last stop! She hopes to spend the next two years in her post-doctoral studies establishing a strong plan for independent research, enriching her program evaluation skills, and learning methods to influence mental health policy in Canada. She also wishes to continue to teach and mentor occupational therapy students. Her ultimate goal: to become an independent investigator and educator in Rehabilitation Sciences in a leading academic center.

For more information about Skye or her research, please contact her at skyebarbic@gmail.com

Focus on Research: Dr. Mineko Wada

Dr. Mineko Wada is a postdoctoral research fellow currently involved in two research projects. In one project, she is working alongside Dr. Laura Hurd Clarke (School of Kinesiology) and Dr. Ben Mortenson to explore older adults' engagement in online dating. In light of changing representations of older adults' sexuality in response to shifting perceptions of what it means to age well, Mineko examined how popular newspapers and magazines in Canada constructed and portrayed sexuality in later life within the context of online dating. Overall, Canadian magazines and newspapers depicted older adults as capable of both enjoying sexual activities and being interested in doing so. Depictions of later life sexuality thus exhibit shifting meanings associated with older adults' sexual engagement and challenge the stereotype of adults as non-sexual and post-sexual.

Mineko is now quantitatively examining how older adults present and construct their self in their online dating profiles in terms of their ability to age successfully and how their age, gender, ethnic origin, and education are associated with their presentation of being a successful ager. As presented self often comprises ideal self, the examination of the presented self will uncover social and cultural values relating to what successful aging means to older adults as they seek a sexual, romantic, and/or intimate relationship.

Another project in which Mineko is involved is Mental Health Needs Assessment (MHNA) which Michael Lee has spearheaded since 2012. MHNAs conducted in the last two

years revealed that UBC students were under immense pressure to establish and maintain mentally and academically able identities and that the university's ability-focused culture was a barrier to their disclosing mental health issues and concerns and caused them to feel a lack of belonging. The 2014-2015 MHNA builds on the prior MHNAs by qualitatively exploring UBC faculty's and staff's views of how academic communities can promote students' mental health and well-being. Using the findings, the MHNA research team will develop a survey that will be conducted with students across campus to identify systemic, environmental, pedagogical, and policy-related changes to enhance the inclusiveness of post-secondary education and improve students' mental health and well-being. Concurrently, Mineko is part of another MHNA that investigates UBC international students' needs to sustain and promote mental health and well-being in order to contribute to creating inclusive, healthy campus communities for the international students to thrive both mentally and academically.

Introducing... Dr. Sinéad Hynes

By Dr. Sue Forwell



Dr. Sinéad Hynes will begin her postdoctoral fellowship at OSOT on November 1. Sinéad completed her occupational therapy education at the National University of Ireland, Galway, then worked for a

year as a therapist prior to beginning her doctoral studies at the University at Cambridge. Her PhD focused on neurorehabilitation, specifically related to assessment and interventions for people with memory and problem-solving difficulties. She completed her doctorate in 2012.

Prior to embarking on this post-doctoral fellowship, Sinéad was based at the Medical Research Council Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit in London, UK as trial manager, occupational therapist and clinical researcher with the project, Valuing Active Life in Dementia. Dr. Hynes has a keen interest in a range of areas in neurology and neurorehabilitation and will be joining Dr. Susan Forwell in the UBC Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy to be involved with and carry out research with people living with multiple sclerosis.

Inclusive Campus Project

By Tal Jarus

"The big thing is the disability thing and it really changes their thinking and how they'll look at me." *Tracy, a student in one of the health and human service programs at UBC*

A stigma, according to Goffman, is an attribute that causes others to classify an individual as undesirable and discredited. The stigmatized individual becomes tainted and the stigmatizing attribute overshadows other unrelated characteristics. This stigmatizing process leads to the development of two groups: 'us' versus 'them'. The 'them' group experiences status loss and discrimination and the 'us' group gains status and power.

Tracy's quote exemplifies the stigmatization and marginalization that many students with disabilities in the health and human service disciplines experience. Their status as student, and future clinician, is discredited because of their disabilities. As one student so poignantly stated, "I'm studying a profession that's telling me that only perfect people can help imperfect people. And that's a very frustrating experience as an imperfect person." Her disability brings her ability to help others into question even though her own experiences as a person with a disability give her important insights that may help her better understand the experiences of her future clients.

Given the stigmatization and marginalization that students with disabilities experience, it is not surprising that they are under-represented within universities and experience higher than average first year drop-out rates. The Inclusive Campus (IC) project is currently exploring the barriers, challenges, and facilitators these students experience as well as offering students support through personalized accessibility plans (myAPs), a peer support community called the Inclusive Campus Community (ICC), and mentor-

ship opportunities with clinicians living with disabilities. We also offer workshops and are in the processes of creating accessibility guidelines for students, staff, and faculty. It is our hope that through increasing the diversity of students now we will increase the diversity of future clinicians, thus allowing them to more accurately represent the diversity of the society that they will serve.

To learn more or to participate in our project, contact: inclusive.campus@ubc.ca

Poster Prize

At the October 9 Centre for Health Education Scholarship (CHES) annual celebration day/conference, Dr. Tal Jarus and her team won the "most thought-provoking poster" prize for their poster entitled "My Accessibility Plan: Facilitating Access to Health and Human Service Education." Congratulations to all!



Dr. Tal Jarus accepting the team prize

SSHRC Partnership Grant



Dr. Ben Mortenson

Congratulations to Dr. William Miller and Dr. Ben Mortenson for contributing to this year's successful Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Partnership Grant titled, "Enhancing community participation in Canadians with physical disabilities: development, implementation and evaluation of a partnered strategy." The seven-year project has been awarded \$2,643,997 and was one of only fourteen chosen by SSHRC in the Canada-wide Partnership Grants competition.

Dr. Kathleen Martin Ginis of McMaster University is leading this seven-year project that will enhance the quantity and quality of community participation among Canadians living with a physical disability. More than 50 partners - ranging from community-based disability-related service groups to government organizations at every level, and from university researchers to non-profits and national charities - are committed to developing and implementing evidence-based tools and services to assist Canadians with disabilities to achieve full community participation. Sport (both recreational and competitive leisure time physical activities); Employment (both employment-seeking and retention); and Mobility (movement about one's community) are the three components of participation that will be examined by this project.

Dr. William Miller will lead the Mobility Team and Dr. Ben Mortenson will be contributing his expertise to the Mobility team alongside Drs. Jaimie Borisoff (British Columbia Institute of Technology), Janice Eng (The University of British Columbia), Louise Demers (Université de Montréal), Francois Routhier (Université Laval), and Habib Chaudhury (Simon Fraser University).



Dr. William Miller

MRSc Updates

Why I did my Masters of Rehabilitation Science...

Here is what 40 of our recent MRSc graduates said about why they decided to get to get off the fence and get into action...

Fulfilment of personal and professional goals

- The challenge
- Fulfilling a dream
- Expanding my worldview and knowledge
- Personal satisfaction

Developing research savvy

- Learn to design and implement research
- Learn to critique and use existing research
- Effectively use research to inform practice i.e. become more evidence based

Keeping current and engaged

- Broaden knowledge and skills to remain competitive
- Stay current and relevant in my profession
- Become or improve myself as a resource
- Revitalize and bring passion back into my career

Expand knowledge and skills for practice

- Improve care of patients
- Develop skills relevant to programmatic/service level of rehabilitation practice e.g. program development and evaluation
- Contribute to and advance my area of practice/profession

Opening doors for career development

- Broaden knowledge, skills and qualifications to increase opportunities for career advancement, leadership and/or new roles i.e. teaching or leadership

It's time... Your Master's is Just a Click Away!

Check out course-based and research study options at www.mrsc.ubc.ca or email us at info@mrsc.ubc.ca

MRSc: Apply by April 30 for September entry; September 30 for January entry

GCR: May 15 for September entry; October 15 for January entry

2014: Our 10th Anniversary Year

MRSc Updates



MRSc Graduate spotlight: Sarah Sinanan, OT, Class of 2014

Sarah graduated in May 2014 as one of the first MRSc learners to complete the **course-based option**. The following month she accepted a leadership role as Occupational Therapy Practice Coordinator at GF Strong Rehabilitation Centre.

When asked about her new leadership role Sarah says: "The MRSc should be the training course for this job... the experiences I had led me into this job in a completely different practice area and I landed on the ground running. I could not have gone from a mental health leader into this role without that bridge." Sarah describes the MRSc as "an extremely personal journey that I could tailor to my professional interests".

To read more about Sarah [click here](#) or sign up for Sarah's [Research Relay](#) on Healthcare Leadership in Times of Prolonged Uncertainty: Nov 21, 2014: 12:00 - 1:00pm PST.

Congratulations to the 2014 MRSc Fall Graduates

Congratulations to Fall 2014 Graduates, physiotherapists Stacy Miller and Robyn Atkinson (formerly Vermeulen), and occupational therapist, James Bardy.

Stacey and Robyn were recently featured in the UBC Faculty of Medicine Graduate Spotlight and will be presenting in this fall's Research Relay series. Read more about [Stacey and Robyn here](#).

Register for Fall Research Relays for Rehabilitation Practice:

Registration for the Fall Research Relays for Rehabilitation Practice is free, and if you can't attend the webinars, listen to the archives!

For more information, see the following:
[Online Registration Link](#)

Clinical Faculty Affairs

By Patti Erlendson

Patti Erlendson represents UBC OSOT on the Faculty of Medicine Clinical Faculty Affairs Committee (CFAC). CFAC meets monthly and here are a few highlights from recent meetings:

The UBC policy on clinical faculty appointments will be updated for July 2015. The current policy is located [here](#). If you have any suggestions about changing the appointment policy please contact Patti.

The teaching tracking tool will be piloted in the MD undergraduate program early in 2015. This tool will assist clinical faculty to track their teaching at UBC.

The [clinical faculty website](#) will be updated regularly to ensure communication with clinical faculty. A toll-free phone number for clinical faculty will be operational soon, for assisting clinical faculty and answering questions. For now, questions can be sent to: ocfa.med@ubc.ca

MOT application opens November 1, 2014—February 1, 2015.
For more information please see website: www.osot.ubc.ca

Alumni Bursary

Rehabilitation Science students discover a therapy for rising tuition costs

Many students and alumni of Occupational and Physical Therapy know that higher education is an expensive undertaking—one that is growing more expensive each year. As they strive to improve the health of patients, students often make decisions based on their financial strain, from where they to live, to the food they eat, to the textbooks they buy.

So, when the Canadian government stopped allocating monthly stipends to rehabilitation science students in 1979, Nancy Cho, a UBC School of Rehabilitation Medicine graduate of 1982, decided to help her fellow students make ends meet. Together with the student council, Nancy established the University of BC Rehabilitation Sciences Alumni Bursary, enabling friends and alumni of the UBC program to give to future generations of physical and occupational therapists and to support the program that inspired their careers.

As a result of the generous support of alumni like Karen van der Hoop and Karol Elliott, the bursary's endowment fund is now able to provide two \$2,250 awards per year. These twin sisters, both Rehabilitation Sciences graduates of 1979, regularly give to the Rehabilitation Alumni Bursary and have provided generously for future students through gifts in their wills. However, with rising tuition costs and the high cost of living in BC, further philanthropic support for dedicated students is needed .



Rehabilitation Sciences twins, Karen and Karol

Bursary inspires life-enhancing research in Occupational Therapy

One of the bursary's early recipients was Dr. William (Bill) Miller, an Occupational Therapy (OT) graduate of 1989 and current Associate Dean of Health Professions and Professor in the UBC Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy. In 1988, Bill was extremely busy and there was no time to earn money. While he and his wife expected their second child, Bill was coaching one ice hockey team, playing on another team, and completing his third year in OT. Bill's course load was heavy, and his family's budget was stretched. It was a challenging time for Bill, and he recalls, "Every dollar allowed me to continue my OT studies. The bursary probably fed our kids."



Bill Miller, his wife, Francine, and their three daughters

The support Bill received from student awards at UBC and later at the University of Western Ontario inspired him to stay in academia and solve critical gaps he noticed in the Occupational Sciences. Now, Bill continues to investigate improved therapeutic methods and expand the care we provide to patients with spinal cord injuries, fatigue and function in neuromuscular and neurologic disorder, and other mobility issues.

In 2012, the bursary celebrated its 30th Anniversary, and Nancy Cho set a goal of raising an additional \$30,000 to top-up the bursary fund, in support of the next generation of occupational and physical therapists. This goal is now more than half-way reached, and your support is urgently needed to expand the aid we can provide to our students to reduce their financial burden.

For more information on donating, please see: <http://osot.ubc.ca/about/donations/>

Information Session

November 4, 2014
4 - 6 pm
Five Sites, One Night

UBC - Point Grey Campus (Vancouver)
Nanaimo Regional General Hospital
University of Victoria
UBC - Okanagan (Kelowna)
University of Northern British Columbia (Prince George)

Master of Occupational Therapy

A cartoon illustration of a graduate in a cap and gown holding a sign that says "MOT". To the right, a group of diverse people, including a woman with a baby, a man with a cane, and a person in a wheelchair, are standing together.

Capstone Conference continued...

How occupational therapy influences life: Author of *Franklin the Turtle*, Paulette Bourgeois, shares her personal journey

By Kerry Blackadar

When Paulette Bourgeois, best-known for creating the *Franklin the Turtle* series, walked up to the podium at this year's annual Occupational Therapy (OT) [Capstone Conference](#), there was one question on everybody's mind: What is a world-renowned children's author doing at an OT conference? And serving as the keynote speaker nonetheless?

As it turns out, this writer knows a thing or two about occupational therapy. In fact, Bourgeois is a former occupational therapist and was part of the first class of graduates from the University of Western Ontario's Bachelor of Science degree program in OT.

As the keynote speaker at UBC's OT Capstone Conference (a day-long conference that highlights the academic work and research of the Master of Occupational Therapy program's graduating class), Bourgeois shared her personal journey with the audience, outlining the formative role her training in occupational therapy has played throughout her time as a journalist and writer.

"There's a lot of connection between journalism and occupational therapy," she says. "As a therapist, I learned to listen to people and wrote down their stories - journalism is the same."

In the late 1970s, after several years of working in the field as a psychiatric occupational therapist, Bourgeois realized she had yet to find her true calling.

"I liked writing up the case histories more than anything else," she says.

So, Bourgeois switched focus and went back to school - but this time to pursue a degree in journalism from Carleton University. After completing her degree, she landed a number of opportunities, first as a reporter for the *Ottawa Citizen* and CBC, then as a freelance journalist with *Maclean's*, *Chatelaine*, *Canadian Living*, and *Reader's Digest*. But it wasn't until her daughter was born that Bourgeois decided to write books for children - a move that led to a prolific career as a children's author.

Bourgeois continues to credit her training as an occupational therapist for her ability to see the world from a 'holistic point of view' - a critical skill for any writer.

"As an occupational therapist, you're trained to look at things holistically. You see the links between disparate things," says Bourgeois.

After the address, MOT students lined up to speak with Bourgeois and have her sign copies of one of her latest works: "*You, Me and my O.T.*" - an illustrated children's book that explains the various jobs occupational therapists perform in homes, schools and the community. UBC's MOT students receive a copy of "*You, Me and my O.T.*" from faculty after completing their first year of the program - a light read just in time for the summer holidays.



Research Participants Needed

Dr. Jill Zwicker, Assistant Professor at UBC Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, is seeking **children with suspected developmental coordination disorder (DCD) and typically-developing children (8-12 years old)** to participate in a magnetic resonance imaging study to compare brain structure and function between these two groups of children. Children who struggle to learn motor skills will receive 12 weeks of occupational therapy intervention to work on child-specific motor goals. For more information, please contact Sandy Belanger at sbelanger@cw.bc.ca or (604) 875-2345 ext 5948



a place of mind

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View of Georgia Strait from UBC Point Grey Campus in Autumn

The Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy supports three graduate academic programs.

- The [Master in Occupational Therapy \(MOT\)](#) program, for those looking to practice professionally as an Occupational Therapist;
- The [Master of Science \(MSc\) and PhD programs](#) in Rehabilitation Sciences, for those interested in research credentials and the science of occupation; and
- The online [Master of Rehabilitation Science \(MRSc\)](#) is for practitioners interested in obtaining a graduate degree while working that will advance their career and change practice.



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